



ASD Service Beacon

A regular publication for FSIS field and headquarters employees.

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bea-con (bē-kōn) *noun*

A signaling or guiding device, such as a lighthouse, located on a coast. A source of guidance or inspiration.

DIRECTOR'S CORNER

Electronic Forms

by Glen Durst

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In previous columns in the Director's Corner, I discussed innovations in the delivery of supplies from the Landover Service Center. However, we have the opportunity to improve in other areas, including the filling out and distribution of forms that inspectors, compliance officers, laboratory employees, and office workers complete every day.

The Administrative Services Division, the Automated Information Systems Division, and the Field Automation and Information Management (FAIM) Staff are currently designing and implementing a system that will allow you to electronically fill, print, and distribute some frequently used forms. The goal of the project is to reduce the use of preprinted forms. This should eliminate many of the disadvantages associated with our current form system, which includes the printing and distribution of new forms from the Landover Service Center, the manual completion of the form, and its filing and distribution through the mail. The Agency has selected JetForm FormFlow as the standard software package, which will be installed on all office, laboratory, and FAIM computers.

As we enter the 21st century, all inspectors under FAIM and other FSIS employees will have access to a computer. We will have our hardware and communications network in place. The use of electronic forms is an application that can take advantage of this infrastructure to more efficiently and cost effectively fulfill the Agency's mission.

OCCUPATIONAL SAFETY AND HEALTH

Measuring Air Contaminants

by Tom Wright

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Q: In the September issue of the *ASD Service Beacon*, there was an article about equipment that the Environmental, Health and Safety Branch (EHSB) had recently purchased to measure air contaminants. Can you provide more information about this equipment and its use?

A: Instruments have been purchased to measure ammonia, chlorine, ozone, formaldehyde, and carbon dioxide in the air as well as chlorine in water. In addition, FSIS has located a source for colorimetric direct-reading passive badges to measure a variety of substances in the air including ammonia, chlorine

dioxide, chlorine, ozone, formaldehyde, and carbon dioxide.

The instruments provide us with an accurate measurement of chemicals in the workplace air. Not only has this equipment been purchased, but EHSB safety and health personnel in the field and headquarters have been trained to use the equipment.

If you suspect that there is hazardous air contaminant in your workplace, try to determine the source. What are the symptoms? What part of the building does the contaminant seem to be found? What operation(s) is the contaminant associated with? Is the contaminant sporadic or uniform? What is the odor of the substance? What chemicals are used at the facility? Is the ventilation working properly?

Air contaminant problems are often not easy to determine and correct. However, if you need assistance, please contact your Field Safety and Occupational Health Specialist for your workplace or me. For your reference, please refer to the attached map to determine who is responsible for your plant.

Workers' Compensation Investigations

by John Campbell
202-720-0541

FSIS has developed a statement of work and signed a contract with U.S. Investigations Services, Inc., (USIS) to provide assessment and investigation support to help reduce the Agency's workers' compensation case load.

This is just the beginning of an aggressive program to stem the growth of FSIS workers compensation costs. During the past five years, the workers compensation cost has escalated one million dollars annually, while other public and private sectors have experienced a decline in these costs.

USIS is being asked to re-evaluate some of our older workers' compensation case files and make recommendations to FSIS for possible action. They will also be investigating questionable cases identified through the evaluation process or other suspicious or possibly fraudulent claims. USIS will work directly with Tom Haley, Health and Benefits Section, Personnel Division, Minneapolis, which oversees the FSIS workers' compensation program.

Please direct any questions concerning information found in this article to me at 202-720-0541.

SUPPLIES

Supply System Training Video

by Pete Bridgeman
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The development of the training video for the Field Supply System is now moving along. Jeff White from Human Resources Development Staff came to Landover for a "site shoot" on January 13 & 14, which went very well. The next step is the

studio shoot, followed immediately by editing. Once the edit is completed, we will provide a review copy to the National Joint Council. We are still optimistic that the process will be completed in time to have the video available to Circuit Supervisors and District Offices by the middle of March.

Customer I.D. Numbers On Orders

We still have a large number of orders coming into the Landover Service Center without a Customer I.D. number on the order. This causes untold delays in the processing of the orders, which slows down the whole system, making timely delivery of all orders more difficult. The Customer I.D. number is the 8-digit number, beginning with "37", that each account is assigned when it is first established in the supply system. When an order doesn't have an account number on it, it gets sent over to Administrative Services Division in headquarters to verify if it's a valid account and to identify the Customer I.D. Number. It then has to get sent back to Landover for processing. This adds several days processing time to these orders, and a lot of unnecessary extra time and work that would be avoided by simply putting the number on the order. If you don't know what your Customer I.D. Number is, or have lost it, please call us at 1-800-714-8335, and we'll be happy to look it up for you. Sending your order to Landover without it is the perfect way to delay delivery of your needed forms and supplies.

Welcome Former Florida State Plants & Employees

We'd like to welcome all of the new federal employees and plants from the State of Florida, who joined the USDA, Food Safety and Inspection Service under the designation that took effect in December 1997. New Supply Customer Accounts were established in Landover for all of the

new headquarter plants resulting from the Florida State designation. Listed below are the locations where new accounts have been established. The Atlanta District Office provided this list to ASD. We had Welcome Kits sent to each of these locations, including the Supply Welcome Catalog, ordering forms (CFPDC-1 and -1a), Landover envelopes, along with initial supplies of T&A forms and envelopes, Travel Vouchers and FSIS 5110-1's (Services Rendered forms):

Est No	Plant Name and Location
11111	Bradley's Country Store Tallahassee, FL
11117	Florida Packing & Provision East Palatka, FL
11118	Mermaid Spice Corp Fort Myers, FL
11120	Hopkins Meat Packing Sanford, FL
11126	Balter Meats Miami, FL
11127	Davidson Farms Punta Gorda, FL
11132	Argentina Bakers Miami, FL
11142	Food Parade Whlsl Meats Brooksville, FL
11143	High Top Products, Inc Miami, FL
11147	Micciotta Meats Oakland Park, FL
11148	Lorenzo Del Moral, Inc Medley, FL
11151	Rainbox Catering Hialeah, FL
11154	Las Milpa, Inc Hialeah, FL
11158	Driggers & Sons Jasper, FL
11163	Douglas Foods Arcadia, FL
11164	City Meats Co. of Tampa Tampa, FL
11166	Hoof & Horn Plant City, FL
11168	Mobley's Custom Cuts McAlpin, FL
11176	Rubin A. Hernandez Naples, FL
Est No	Plant Name and Location
11177	Florida Shortening Corp Miami, FL

- 11178 La Nueva Pasterlern
Hialeah, FL
- 11182 Kaye Brothers
N. Miami Beach, FL
- 11187 Inter-City Meats
Sarasota, FL
- 11192 Corbin 4-Pt. Packing
Chipley, FL

There has to be an account set up in Landover in order to fill a supply order. Any orders from new plants other than those listed can not be filled. If you are at a Headquarter Plant that wasn't listed above, please notify the Atlanta District Office, and contact us at 1-800-714-8335 to establish an account before sending an order to Landover for supplies. We've already received a number of orders from new plants other than those listed, and these have had to be returned unfilled. Please feel free, also, to call us with any questions regarding how to order supplies – we are more than happy to help you get acquainted with the new system.

PERSONNAL PROPERTY

The Year 2000 Problem

by Perry Hamilton

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Our discussion continues! Do you have information to contribute?

Monday, January 3, 2000 is the first workday of the Year 2000 but our deadline for completing all required Year 2000 repairs has changed. The new deadline is March 1999, just 13 months away.

In the January Beacon, I described the Year 2000 problem. Since the January newsletter, there have been new developments and questions. One person asked if the Year 2000 problem could involve buildings occupied by in-plant inspectors; others have asked about "forms", and "dates" and "credit cards".

We're not talking about computers and software. We are talking about where we work, the work we do, and the "tools" we use to get our work done. A good word is "interoperability"; it is an important concept as we think about how the Year 2000 problem may affect us. Will our "tools" work together or will a failure in one "tool" cause other failures we do not know about today?

Year 2000 failures may affect buildings, facilities, and other property used by FSIS. The forms we use to collect information, the records we depend on to make decisions and to document what we do may need to be revised so that dates are properly recorded and processed by others.

Some things will fail to operate on or after January 1, 2000. Many failures will annoy us but we will be able to continue working. Our most important work will not be affected if we identify "mission critical" problems now and correct them. Building on January's article, here are four important questions to ask about a possible Year 2000 "failure" to operate:

- Will you be able to perform your primary mission effectively?
- How critical is each task or work process that you do not perform as a result of a "failure" to the accomplishment of FSIS's mission and the responsibilities assigned to you, to your office or laboratory?
- Will a "failure" affect employee health and safety?
- Will a "failure" affect security or the accuracy of important records?

We will be asking your Headquarters representative to designate at least one person in each office and laboratory to be a

local Year 2000 "Point of Contact". If you get questions about the Year 2000 from other organizations or offices, please call me. We don't want you burdened with unnecessary or duplicative work.

See you next month!!

FACILITIES

Eastern Laboratory Sample Receiving Room

by Victor Randecker

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Renovations were recently completed to the Sample Receiving Room at the Eastern Laboratory in Athens, GA. This room has doubled in size and now contains 6,500 square feet of space. These renovations provide for a specific area for the receipt of HACCP samples and for the storage HACCP supplies.

These renovations should enhance the orderly flow of samples to the laboratory and the return of sample shipping containers to the plants. The design of this room will allow for the processing of 500 samples daily, thus allowing for the FSIS analysis of samples called for in the HACCP regulations. In addition to HACCP program, food chemistry, residue chemistry, food microbiology, and pathology samples also are shipped to the laboratory and analyzed.

To comment on this newsletter or to submit an article for publication, please e-mail, write, or fax:

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